

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A positioning apparatus comprising:

a stage;

guide elements provided on both ends of the stage; and

5 drive elements which are provided at one of both ends of the stage and move the stage along the guide elements, wherein

stiffness, in a yawing direction of the stage, of the guide elements provided in the area where the drive elements are provided is made higher than that of the guide elements  
10 provided in an area opposite the area where the drive element is provided.

2. The positioning apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

15 a guide element additionally provided in the area of the stage where the drive element is provided.

3. The positioning apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising:

20 a plurality of guide elements provided in the area of the stage where the drive element is provided arranged substantially symmetrically with respect to the drive elements and mutually proximate to each other.

4. The positioning apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the drive elements are formed from a ball screw, and the guide elements are formed from a linear guide.

5 5. The positioning apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the stage has an opening section.

6. An X-Y stage comprising:  
the positioning apparatus defined in claim 1.